

HENRI LE SIDANER.

SOUVENIR CATALOGUE OF
EXHIBITION OF WORKS
HELD IN FEBRUARY, 1905,
AT THE GOUPIL GALLERY,
5, REGENT STREET, LONDON,
CONTAINING PREFATORY NOTE
BY LADY COLIN CAMPBELL,
ILLUSTRATIONS OF ALL
PICTURES EXHIBITED, AND
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WILLIAM
MARCHANT
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Frank Simpson

HENRI LE SIDANER.

FORE-WORD.

THE ever-growing interest and admiration with which the works of HENRI LE SIDANER have been and are viewed in Paris is the best excuse, if one be needed, for the present exhibition of his pictures in London. The acquisition by the Luxembourg authorities of a second picture by him from last year's Salon is a most satisfactory and encouraging proof of official appreciation, the first being "La Table à la Lampe," which was bought by the Luxembourg three years ago. In last year's Salon, the picture which the Luxembourg desired to buy was "La Place du Théâtre Français," which figures in the present exhibition (No. 26), having been lent by its fortunate owner. As this picture had been already sold, the Luxembourg had to be content with "Le Dessert," one of those interiors wherein LE SIDANER's exquisite treatment of still life and sunshine is so peculiarly and characteristically happy.

This ever-widening interest and appreciation of a fine artist in his own country is all the more satisfactory in view of the recent regrettable tendency of certain London critics to speak of LE SIDANER's work as "monotonous," to which vague disparagement the present exhibition is the best answer.

If LE SIDANER is "monotonous," so, to a far greater extent, were the great masters Corot and Whistler. Any artist of pronounced individuality of vision and technique cannot help expressing that individuality of style and subject in everything he puts on paper or canvas. It is a matter of congratulation, not of regret, that he should do so, for thereby we reach the artist and come into sympathetic touch with him and his personality. But if ever the epithet of "monotonous" was undeserved by a painter, it is by LE SIDANER. He gives us the dancing joy of sunlight, the shimmering mystery of the moon, the virginal beauty of maidenhood and dawn, the rustling of trees in the night wind, or the silence of the snow, the stately impressiveness and majesty of a great cathedral, or the "treasure of the humble" in some wayside cottage, whose one poor lamp glows, warm as a human heart, from under the lowly eaves. He can show us that an empty ill-paved street is as full of poetry as a sun-lit garden, or a statue of the Grand Trianon, with its trailing mantle of gold and russet leaves, vieing in colour with the Manteau de Cour of a forgotten favourite. If to be a poet in paint, to see beauty in everything, to discover it in unsuspected corners as few have done before him, is to be "monotonous," then and thus only can the epithet be applied to this painter who, with his Breton blood and Creole birth and up-bringing (for he was a grown boy before he left Mauritius, where he was born on the 7th August, 1862), seems to have evolved a strange kind of glamour and tenderness which enwraps his work and keeps it apart from the influences of the time, "unspotted from the world." The hard-headed Breton comes out in his absolute realism and simplicity and his faithfulness of drawing and detail; the languorous softness of the Creole is shown in his enveloping sense of beauty which gives mystery and poetry to the simplest scene he touches. Could anything be more simple or less intentional (the French word *voulu* best expresses my meaning) than his picture of "La Table au Clair de Lune?" (No. 33). A table, spread with a white cloth, set out in a back garden; on the table a couple of white coffee-cups, a silver coffee-pot, a sugar bowl, and a vase of white flowers, two chairs pushed back as if the occupants had but just returned to the house in the background, where one window glows in the moonlit façade like a topaz set in silver. Nothing more; the description is as bald as an auctioneer's catalogue. But who could render in words the beauty and poetic suggestion of the picture, the exquisite values of the different tones of the white objects in moonlight and shadow, the aspen trees rustling in the night breeze which makes their faint shadows flicker across the white house standing bathed in the silver flood of the unseen moon, or the atmosphere of the summer night which fills the picture? Something of the strange beauty of this picture is conveyed in the following charming verses which the French poet and critic, M. Camille Mauclair, has written thereon:—

UN LE SIDANER.

Clair de lune, nappe blanche,
Cristaux tremblants, linge, reflets,
Une lueur monte et s'épanche
Mystérieux fleuve de lait.



La lampe est une âme pâle,
Dans la nuit plus pâle encore,
La douceur est telle ce soir
Que l'on ne sait si l'heure exhale
Un sourire ou un soupir.



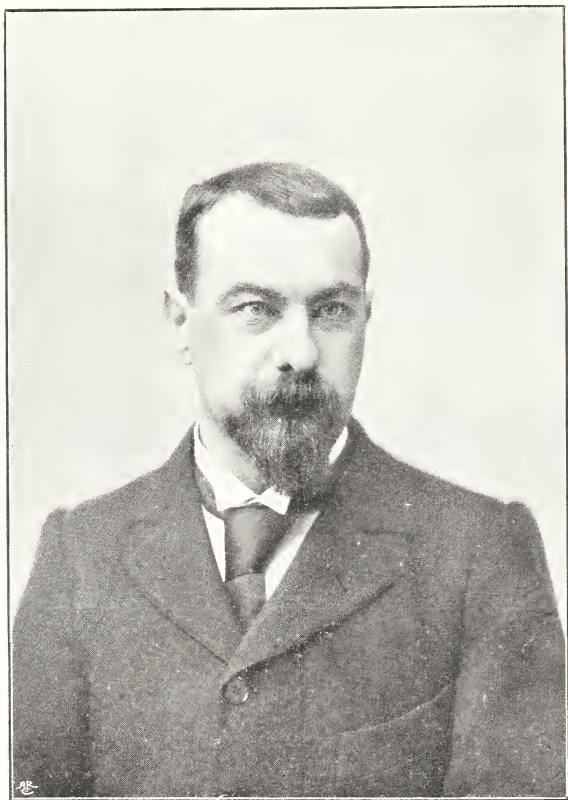
Tout s'immatérialise
Et l'heure qui tinte à l'Eglise
Ne fait pas plus de bruit qu'une fleur
Tombant pétale à pétale
Sur la nappe pâre et pâle. . . .

Many painters call to Beauty with trumpets and with shawms, with blatant colours, or with illustrated anecdote ; and She does not come, or sends in Her place the meretricious minx Popularity. But into HENRI LE SIDANER'S work She steals silently, and with Her aid he transmutes all common things into Her semblance, opening his eyes to the delicate loveliness of values, the tenderness of atmosphere, the joy of sunlight, the gentleness of the moonbeams, and the lovely mystery of the great silences of nature. For he is, above all, the painter of silence and serenity. The riot of modern life, the "rabble rout" of artistic jealousies and struggles for supremacy, leave him undisturbed ; and those who are privileged to see and possess his works recognise in them a quality of peace and tranquil harmony which is to be found in few modern pictures, combined with a beauty and truth of colour and atmosphere which are as rare as they are a lasting delight.

VERA CAMPBELL.

This Exhibition was the first held in England of the works of Monsieur Henri Le Sidaner, and it was through the courtesy of the several British and French owners that Messrs. William Marchant & Co. were enabled to bring the collection together.

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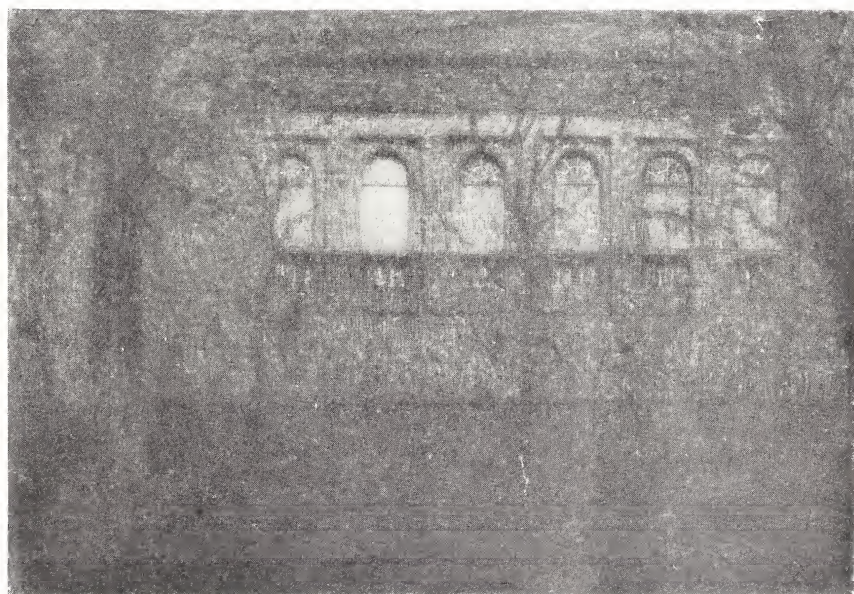
HENRI LE SIDANER.



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1.—IMPRESSION DE BRUGES.



2.—L'ORANGERIE DE BRUGES.



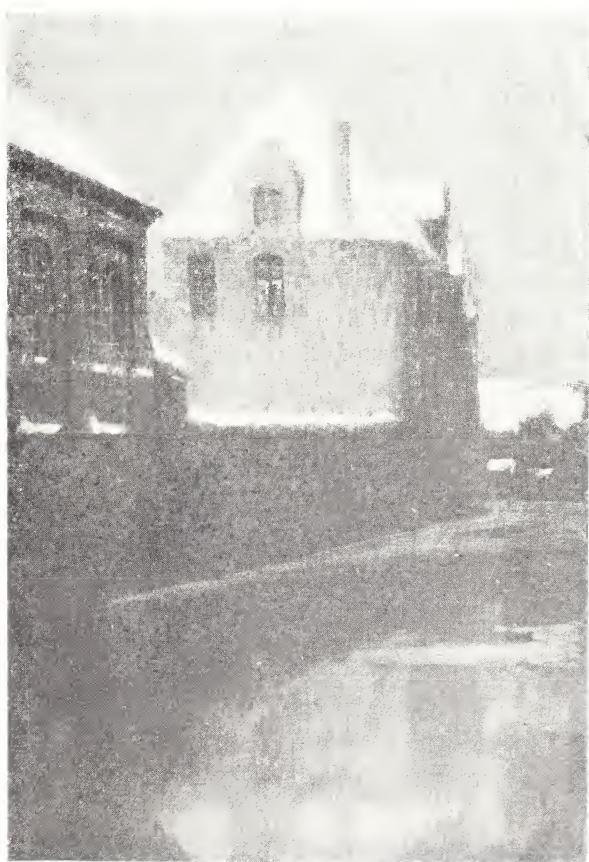
3.—BARQUES DE PÊCHE, COUCHER DE SOLEIL.



4—EN PRIÈRE.



5.—LES LAMPIONS.



6.—CANAL À BRUGES.



7.—PETIT PORT PHILIPPE, GRAVELINES.



8.—LE BÉGUINAGE DE COURTRAY.



9.—LA PLACE, GERBEROY.



10.—SOIR D'ÉTÉ.



11.—LES CHARMES



12.—LA CATHÉDRALE DE BEAUVAIS.



13.—LE PRINTEMPS.



14.—BRUGES LA MORTE (*Pastel*).



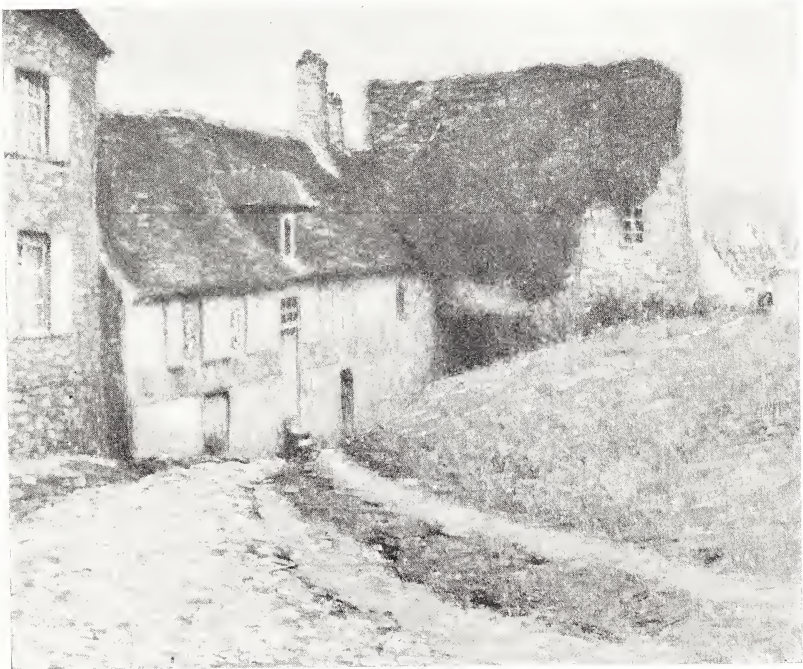
15.—LA MAISON AU BORD DE L'EAU.



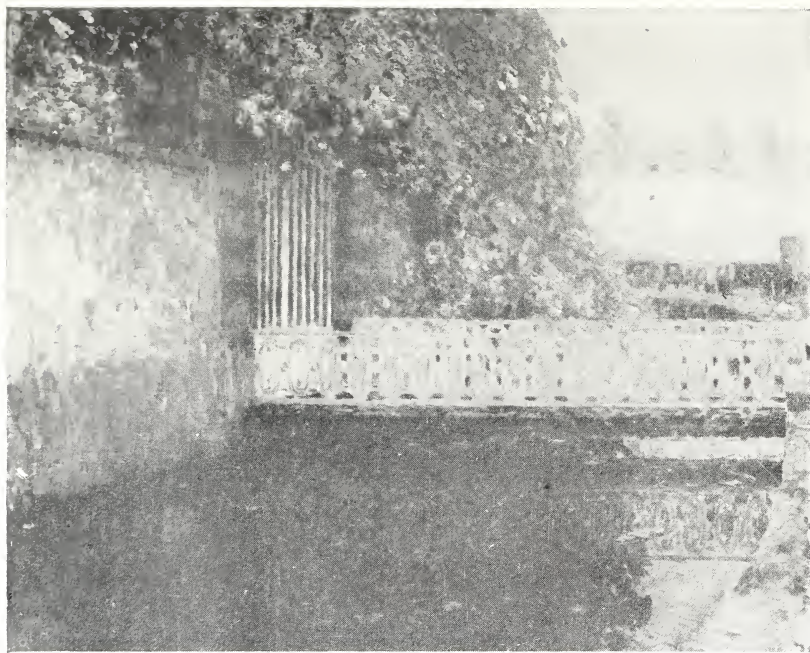
16.—LA CATHÉDRALE, CHARTRES (*Pastel*).



17.—BUICOURT, EN NEIGE.



18.—LA RUE DE L'ARCHE.



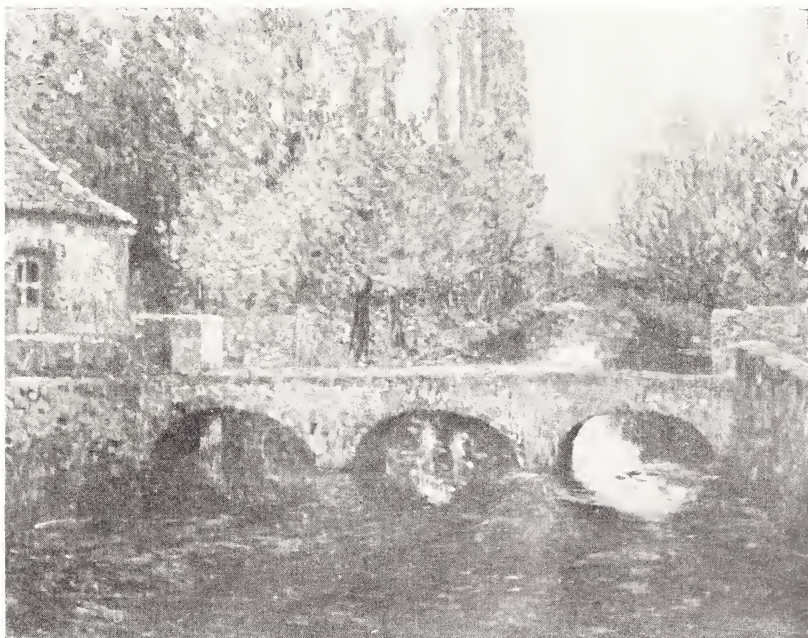
19. LE PETIT PONT DE FER, GISORS.



20.—LE PETIT TRIANON.



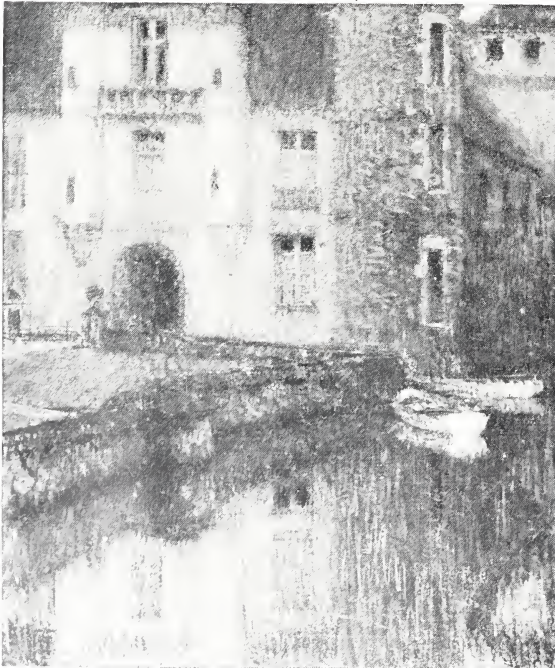
21.—APRÈS LE DÉJEÛNER.



22.—L'AUTOMNE.



23.—CLAIR DE LUNE À GERBEROY.



24.—LE CHÂTEAU DE MAINTENON (*Pastel*).



25.—MON JARDIN



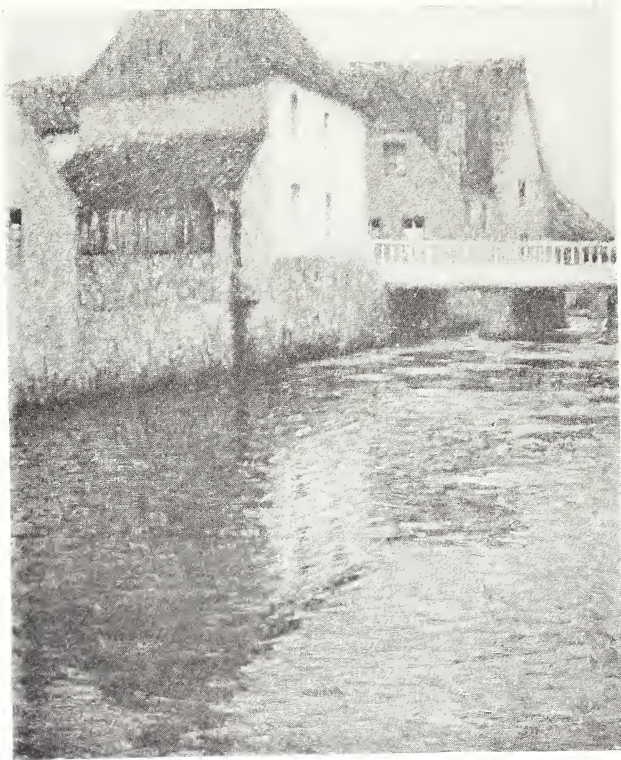
26.—LA PLACE DU THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS.



27.—L'ESCALIER.



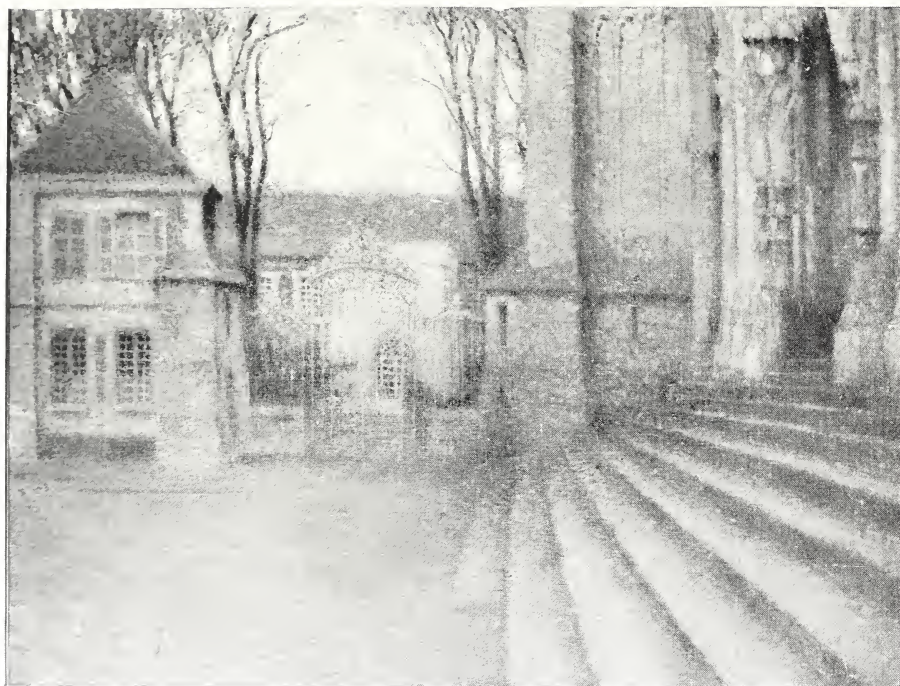
28.—ENTRÉE DE VILLAGE.



29.—LE PETIT PONT BLANC.



30.—LA PETITE ÉPICERIE.



31.—L'ÉVÊCHÉ DE CHARTRES.



32.—UN JOUR D'HIVER.



33.—LA TABLE AU CLAIR DE LUNE.



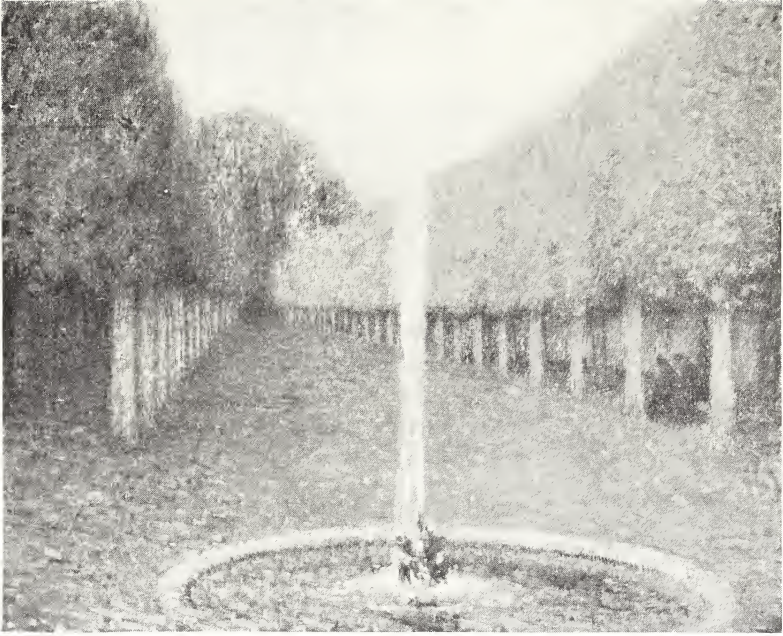
34.—NEIGE AU SOLEIL.



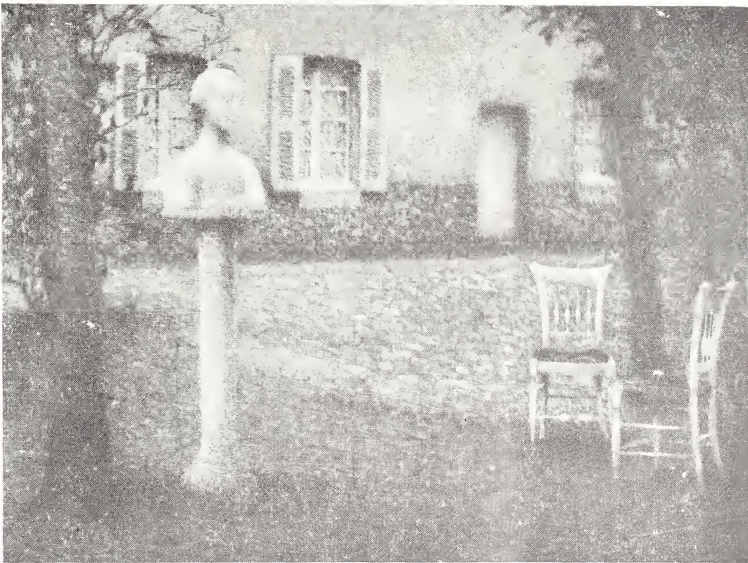
35.—AU JARDIN.



36.—CANAL, HIVER.



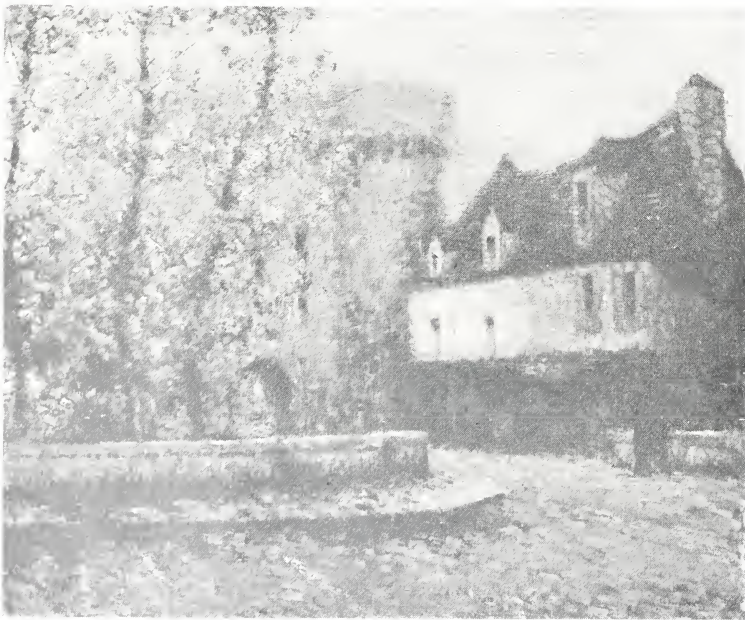
37.—LA FONTAINE.



38.—LE BUSTE.



39.—LA TERRASSE—NEIGE.



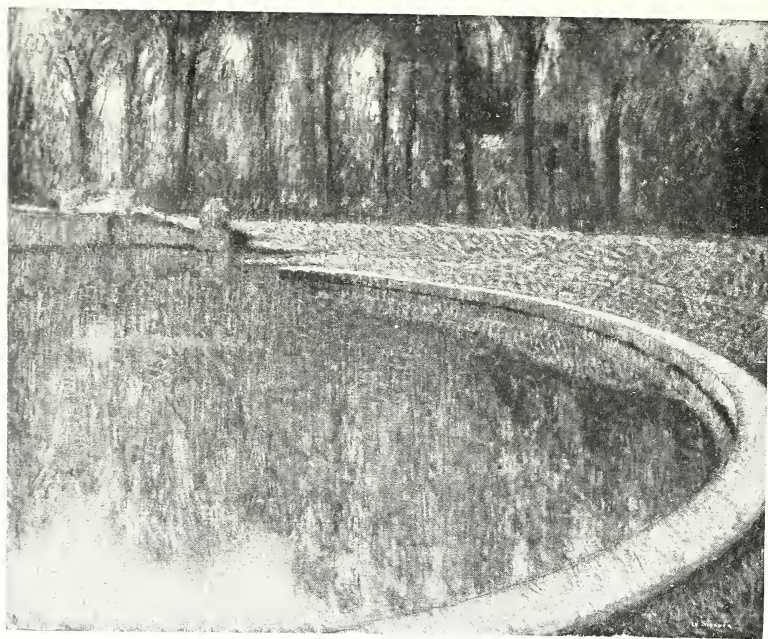
40.—CHARTRES, LA PORTE GUILLAUME.



41.—LE GOUTER AU JARDIN.



42.—LA NEIGE.



43.—LE BASSIN DES TUILERIES (*Pastel*).



44.—RUE DE VILLAGE.

PRESS NOTICES.

"The ART JOURNAL."

April.

At the Goupil Gallery there was held a most welcome Exhibition of pictures and pastels by a French painter of a later generation than Fantin—M. Le Sidaner. This, the first "one-man" show in England of pictures by an artist of fine apprehension, for whose introduction to collectors in this country Mr. Marchant had ample warrant, serves to dispose of the charge that he works within a too restricted area. Subtly, and to beautiful purpose, he introduces yellow-lighted casements, white, evening-shadowed house-fronts, or shows a sun-dappled table, "*Après le déjeuner*," translucent golden wine in the glass, lovely flowers in a vase.

The "BAZAAR."

February 25th.

PICTURES AND PASTELS.

WE use the title Messrs. W. Marchant and Co. give to the collection of works by M. Henri Sidaner, at the Goupil Gallery; but paintings in pastel are as much "pictures" as are those in oils. There is something very captivating in Le Sidaner's art. Perhaps alluring would be the better word, as his pictures do not instantaneously strike the eye or imagination—they grow into one's regard. Monotone of subject is not his, but assuredly he has a convention of atmosphere, much as Carrière has which creates a feeling of sameness, even when hour and season are as far apart as they can be. And it is in the hours and seasons which agree with those envelopes of mist wherewith he enwraps all, that entire content is found. Some of the pictures enslave us, whether we would or not. We mean that the objects shown are so prosaic, but the tonality is so lovely that we feel the witchery of moonlight and the quietude of the time till we quite forget the empty chairs and the table, with its equipment, which are predominant. Some of the pictures have been seen in this gallery before; but there are others of the highest quality, and such a collection can

not do other than raise Sidaner in the estimation of all who value individuality, and whose taste runs to delicate tone rather than to blatant colour. Exquisite in subtlety of tones is "*La Table au Clair de Lune*," and scarcely less original in its purity is "*Après le Déjeuner*." Nacreous tints of Monet character give colour to "*Neige au Soleil*"; but we prefer the strong and crisp "*La Terrasse, Neige*," which is flooded with moonlight. A favourite device is to paint house or cottage with one glowing window striking warmth and suggesting humanity, into the cold solitude of scene that is steeped in moisture-laden air. "*Le Petit Trianon*" is one of these, and "*La Maison au Bord de l'Eau*" is another of the good things by this very personal painter. An interior of a scheme of white treated with great skill, is "*L'Escalier*." Of more positive colour than any, and so good as almost to shake our opinion of his supremacy in values of high key, is "*L'Automme*."

The "BIRMINGHAM POST."

February 14th.

AN exhibition of a very different type is presented at the Goupil Gallery, where M. Le Sidaner, a prominent French painter, has brought together a number of his oil paintings and pastels. He is to be counted as a member of the modern impressionist school, but his impressionism is not of the extreme type; there is a charming delicacy and tenderness of colour in his pictures, and his rendering of the atmospheric effects is delightfully subtle and yet perfectly significant. In such examples as "*Neige au Soleil*," "*Chartres, La Porte Guillaume*," and the pastel "*Le Bassin des Tuileries*," and especially in the wonderful record of sunlight, "*Mon Jardin*," his management of open-air motives is most convincingly displayed; and another and very interesting side of his capacity is seen in the still life picture "*Après le Déjeuner*," and the interior "*L'Escalier*." He deserves emphatically a place among modern masters.

"BLACK AND WHITE."

March 4th.

THE work of Henri le Sidaner is none too well known in this country, and we should be grateful for the collection of it now to be seen at the Goupil Galleries in Regent Street. What M. le Sidaner does not know about light, and the method of reflecting it upon canvas, seems scarcely worth the knowing. Whether it is the setting sun gilding the tall spires of Chartres Cathedral, or flashing back from the windows of the house in the *Petit Port Philippe, Gravelines*, or glinting through the stained-glass windows into a grey church; or again the pure moonlight falling on the white flowers and chairs and china and napery in the *Table au clair de lune* (a wonderful painting this), or on a snowclad terrace looking across a wintry village, it everywhere speaks of the same certainty of knowledge and poetic charm. Wonderful again is the mastery over artificial light in such a painting as *Les Lampions*, with its coloured lantern globes. M. le Sidaner does not labour his subjects; whatever is, is good to him—a village street, a Paris open-space, the cropped trees in a little country-town "place," a dinner-table set in a country garden, or a still pool reflecting trees, all alike he treats in his alembic, and sets them forth with their beauty—and above all the beauty of their lighting, made plain to the duldest. He has his preferences perhaps—the light coming from a window into the gloaming without is a very favourite effect with him, treated under a dozen aspects in as many pictures, and in all alike convincing. Sometimes he fails, as in the somewhat laboured group of female figures in *Printemps*. But he is a great Painter.

The "BRIGHTON GAZETTE"

February 14th.

ALL the art-loving world ought to go to the Goupil Gallery and see the most fascinating collection of pictures that London can at the present moment boast of. Here are the works in oil and pastel by Monsieur Henri le Sidaner, a painter of Breton blood and Creole birth, whose strange quietude and calm stamp him a poet-painter of remarkable interest and charm. There is that in this artist's work that compels the attention, and in its very silence, its unexpected serenity, it seems to speak with something more than an ordinary painter's persuasiveness. To Henri le Sidaner nature is ever peaceful and tranquil, the sun shines only with tender warmth, it never blazes or blinds; to him the moonlight is more like a subtle atmosphere than direct and silver beams; and when winds blow it is only with a tender, gentle, rustle, whispering soft messages through the aspen trees. Nothing boisterous or blatant assails Henri le Sidaner's brush; in his world there is no storm, no disturbance, no discord, yet his greatest enemy could not call his pictures weak; it is simply that he is too much a poet and an artist "to beat the big drum," so to speak; his work just invites and allures one

with its still small voice, and seeing beauty in all things, he invests the humblest and most simple theme with engrossing interest. Some critics have complained that this painter's work is monotonous but I think an inspection of the present collection would very soon dispel any such idea; it is, in fact, one of the greatest variety. The magnificent work "*La Place du Théâtre*" which was in last year's Salon, is now at the Goupil, and is one of the most striking things in the gallery. The Luxembourg authorities are very keen on to Henri le Sidaner's work, and were anxious to purchase this picture, but it had already been sold. Three years previously they secured his "*La Table à la Lampe*," and last year acquired the beautiful interior piece entitled "*Le Dessert*," which some of my readers may remember.

The "BUILDER."

February 18th.

AN exhibition entirely of pictures M. Le Sidaner might be expected to be somewhat monotonous, for he has been known so far as the painter of one effect, that of old buildings painted as if seen through a mist. The collection of his works at the Goupil Gallery shows, however, a little more variety than might have been expected; and in one work, "*Mon Jardin*" (25), which is the more effective from its contrast with the style of the others, he shows that he can, when he chooses, paint a bright and true effect of open-air daylight. He is a very gifted artist, and if he can only shake off the trammels of his particular mannerism he may do great things. Among the works in this Exhibition that have a special charm, besides the one already mentioned, are "*Impression de Bruges*" (1), a study of a girl's head with a dim background of city scenery just indicated; "*Les Lampions*" (5), a study of the effect of chinese lanterns in a grey twilight; "*Barques de Pêche, Coucher de Soleil*" (3) and "*Canal à Bruges*" (6), two very effective scenes in warm and in cold light; "*Le Petit Pont de Fer, Gisors*" (19), a remarkable piece of colour where a green-painted iron bridge spans a dark moat over-hung by trees; "*L'Automme*" (22), a river scene also very fine in colour; "*L'Escalier*" (28); "*Le Petit Pont Blanc*" (29), where the old houses are very effectively treated. The artist is not so successful in architecture of a more important class; in his "*Chartres*" (16) the cathedral is badly drawn, and in "*Beauvais*" (12) the cathedral fails to show its scale through not being sufficiently set back in perspective from the small house in the foreground. The trick of effect of indicating lights in the windows of a building in an otherwise grey twilight scene is repeated over and over again; it is a very cheap trick, easily imitated by artists of far less ability. The large decorative picture entitled "*Le Printemps*" (13) shows the artist in a new light, as a painter of figures, which however are rather stiff, though the composition is pleasing as a whole.

"COURT JOURNAL."

February 18th.

MESSRS. MARCHANT have opened at the Goupil Gallery what will in all probability be the greatest one-man exhibition of the year. They have brought together forty-four pictures by Henri le Sidaner, and from a "Foreword" to the catalogue by Lady Colin Campbell we gather that this artist is only forty-two years of age. We may consequently expect even finer work from his brush, in spite of his having already attained such skill in the representation of his poetical ideas and observations. He has a genius for painting twilight. During this very brief space of time, which Corot also loved so much, colour, although subdued, becomes more opalescent and insistent without insistence, while the atmosphere inspires a certain feeling of sadness. Le Sidaner not only reproduces this effect with extraordinary realism, but his colour sense and technique are of the very highest order, while his choice of subject is original, uncommon, and of very refined sentiment. It is, indeed, a great advantage to art lovers in this country to have an opportunity to study and enjoy these beautiful works. Curiously enough the finest picture in the collection is not a twilight subject. It is entitled "La Place du Théâtre Français," and it is this picture which the French Government was anxious to buy last year for the Luxembourg. It is now lent by its lucky possessor. Quite a masterpiece in every way, it arrests the attention and commands admiration in spite of the subject being one we have often seen painted, but in this case the handling, colour, and lighting are so masterly that one feels immediately that the painter is a great artist. I consider this the finest painting I have ever seen of a subject of this nature.

There are a large number of subjects which the artist has found ready to his hand in the village of Gerberoy, near Beauvais, where he lives. In the small gallery I was particularly struck by the delicate colour and expression of "Les Lampions," and the quite wonderful beauty of the colour and execution of "Petit Port Philippe, Gravelines." In the large room "Le Petit Tianon" is a very interesting picture, showing how great skill in colour and stone will make a charming picture out of the simplest materials.

"Après le Déjeuner" is a masterpiece of lighting, and "Mon Jardin" shows how this skilful painter of atmosphere can make one realize the heat of the sun when painting a noontide subject. One of the most charming pictures in this collection of simple subjects is "La petite Epicerie" which is surely the *ultima thule* of truth in colour and execution. A very remarkable piece of work is "La table au clair de lune," in which moonlight is reproduced with extraordinary fidelity, having fulness of colour without blackness.

Where every work is so good it is difficult to notice one picture more than another, but I must mention "Le Buste," which is a triumph of simplicity, also a marvellously beautiful piece of pastel work, "Le bassin des Tuileries." Everyone must see this exhibition.

The "DAILY MAIL."

February 14th.

TRUE ART AND SHAM.

Mystic Pictures at the Goupil Gallery.

M. HENRI LE SIDANER has hitherto only been known to the London public by the isolated examples of his work he has sent now and then to various exhibitions. He is now showing forty-six of his pictures at the Goupil Gallery, painted poems, mystical and lyrical, of the greatest intensity of feeling and of the greatest technical accomplishment.

His spirit appears to be closely akin to that of the Belgian poet Maeterlinck. There is the same spirit of mysterious silence, the same stimulating suggestiveness, the same indescribable twilight atmosphere.

Organic life is generally absent from his canvases, an absence of which the beholder immediately becomes keenly conscious. Yet they are many intimate scenes, not dreary or desolate, but quick with human interest of recent human presence, or of things passing behind closed doors and lighted windows.

At the same time, M. le Sidaner has perhaps no equal in the rendering of outdoor light, from the blazing summer sun on field and garden to tremulous twilight struggling with the glare lit by human hands, or to soft, silvery moonlight in town, garden, or country.

To go from this unique exhibition to see "The Great Picture" by Sigismund Goetze, is to descend from the sublime to the ridiculous, from the subtlest of poetry to the coarsest of prose. In "Despised and Rejected of Men" a fine idea, which has the making of a great picture in it, has been vulgarised and turned into a show-picture worthy of being exhibited at country fairs.

The "FAMILY HERALD."

March 4th.

ANOTHER show which peremptorily demands a visit is that of pictures by M. le Sidaner at the Goupil Gallery. He deals, as something of a poet in picture, with golden lighted casements and with the quietudes of life.

The "GLASGOW HERALD."

February 21st.

A MOST attractive loan exhibition of works by M. Henri Le Sidaner may be visited at the Goupil Gallery. It is certain to win for him wider and surer appreciation. At least two of the noticeable pictures in Regent Street come from the north of the Tweed—"Le Bassin des Tuileries," with its sweeping securely-laid semi-circle of stone, its quality of poetic sight; and "La Terrasse-Neige," a scheme in which softened shadow and sunlight play a part. The 44 pictures from his hand serve to indicate how subtly and beautifully and variously he works within an area which the superficial may be inclined to condemn as restricted. He is fond of a glow of golden light, issuing from the casements, now of

shadowed houses in a quiet village, now from those of a chateau at the side of a great alley of gold-green trees, or on the façade of Chartres Cathedral. There is a genuine sense of the solitudes, of time and space, of serenity, expressed in these pictures of Le Sidaner.

"The *GLOBE*."

February 16th.

ANOTHER excellent exhibition is that now open at the Goupil Gallery, where M. le Sidaner, a French artist of remarkable originality, has collected nearly fifty of his oil paintings and pastels. He has plainly enough very marked inclinations towards the modern school of what is called impressionism, but he uses the technicalities of this school in a very personal and intelligent manner. His work is particularly sensitive, and has a subtlety of feeling and handling which makes it unusually attractive. He is a firm and assured draughtsman, and his management of colour and tone modulations is judicious in the highest degree. In such examples as "Le Petit Pont de Fer, Gisors," "Neige au Soleil," "Chartres, la Porte Guillaume," and especially "Mon Jardin" with its suffusion of warm sunlight, there is real mastery, and the pastel, "Le Bassin des Tuileries," is singularly successful in its presentation of a quiet effect, and in its application of the medium chosen. The interior, "L'Escalier," is another very able study. That he is in many ways an artist with powers quite out of the ordinary is clearly demonstrated.

"The *GRAPHIC*."

February 18th.

A REMARKABLE show of oil-paintings and pastels by M. le Sidaner, one of the ablest and most original of living French artists, has just been opened at the Goupil Gallery. His work is more or less akin to that of the impressionists, but he is not a mere follower of a convention, and he has a very individual way of expressing himself. He is an admirable colourist, a sound craftsman, and he draws with grace and distinction.

"The *GUARDIAN*."

February 22nd.

FOR some years past examples of M. Le Sidaner's delicate and refined art have been frequently seen in London exhibitions, and several of the French artist's best pictures are already the property of English collectors. But this is the first exhibition of the painter's collected works which has been held in London, and cannot fail to heighten the growing interest and appreciation with which his art is already regarded. In his own country M. Le Sidaner, we know, is highly esteemed, and two good examples of his work, *La Table à la Lampe* and *Le Dessert*, have been recently bought for the

Luxembourg. The striking individuality of the painter's vision, his peculiar *technique*, and selection of subjects have led some critics to complain of his style as monotonous, a term which may be applied with equal truth to Corot and Monet, to Whistler or Eugène Carrière, and many others whom we could name. But the variety of subjects and treatment in the present exhibition should go far to dispel this impression. The architectural studies, such as the oil-paintings of *La Cathédrale de Beauvais*, *Le Petit Trianon*, and the spires and old houses of Chartres, or the pastels of *Le Château de Maintenon* and *Le Bassin des Tuileries*, are especially fine, both in drawing and colour, and the effects of frost and snow, whether seen under bright sunshine or by soft moonlight, are very happily rendered.

The wide, paved streets and sleepy canals of Bruges la Morte, and the old streets and gabled houses of the less known, but almost equally picturesque town of Gisors, have supplied the painter with subjects after his own heart, and his imagination, it is easy to see, dwells with pleasure on these peaceful and forgotten scenes, far from the rush and hurry of modern life. In *La Table au Clair de Lune*—a table set under shady trees in a back garden, with a silver coffee-pot, white cups, and a vase of white flowers, standing on a white cloth—the artist's exquisite treatment of still life and shimmering moonlight is seen to the best advantage. M. Le Sidaner is a true poet, with a tender feeling for beauty and gentle melancholy of his own. While most of his fellow-countrymen are chiefly occupied in rendering the external aspects of things, he tries to penetrate a little farther below the surface, and show us more of the *intimité* of life, the charm of quiet homes and secluded retreats, of those "haunts of ancient peace" where silence and serenity reign and a tranquil harmony of light and hue pervades the atmosphere.

"The *ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS*."

March 4th.

FOR the first time M. le Sidaner's pictures may be seen in mass; the pleasure may be experienced at the Goupil Galleries. They are paintings of light no less than the pictures we have lately viewed at the Grafton Galleries; but M. Le Sidaner seeks after the emotion belonging to the various hours of the day, he pursues the spirit that haunts the dusk or the late evening, with more persistence than did any one of the French Impressionists. Most beautiful are the two studies at the Goupil Galleries of the French garden, the simple shuttered outward wall of a house, the table set with silver and with glass for an open-air meal, the white tablecloth and white chairs. One of these is painted at that most mysterious time when day still lingers where she can, and night is only an uncertain presence.

"The LADIES' FIELD."

February 25th.

WITH Monsieur le Sidaner's pictures at the Goupil Gallery, we make the fuller friendship that such sensitive work requires and rewards. Nearly fifty paintings and pastels are enough to make certain an artist's strength, or, in M. le Sidaner's case, his giant-like gentleness; for the moderate beauties of light, the mild contrasts of one pale colour against another, of one kind of white against a second kind of white, are the characteristics of his art.

Corot's painting day was done by breakfast time; noon seemed to him commonplace lacking the mystery of morning. "Boum" was his exclamation when the sun reached a certain altitude, and forthwith he put aside his brushes. Nor has M. le Sidaner any love for "*la terrible lumière de midi*." His is the hour of dusk—the still time that follows the sun's setting, when the world has lost day and is not yet possessed by the fulness of night. It is a time whose sadness is not easily set aside in loneliness; and this melancholy is part of the witchery of the hour. M. le Sidaner has not lost the emotions of the time in his transcript of them on canvas; it is part of his genius that he has not done so.

M. le Sidaner, who was born at Mauritius forty-three years ago, as we learn from Lady Colin Campbell's introductory note to the catalogue of the present exhibition, had an early phase of symbolism, a phase happily left behind for a manner which may be best described as the realism of mystery—the actual mystery of dusk. And this is the mysteriousness of his own time and place. M. le Sidaner borrows no awe from the past or the distant. Let him but be alone in the old garden of some charming French house; let there be a table and white table-cloth, with silver or glass, laid for a meal; let there be light within the lighted chambers—but loneliness and M. le Sidaner without—and let it be evening! Then will the artist paint that which he sees—for his eye sees the beauties he records—and the world be richer by such paintings as "*Soir d'Été*" and "*La Table au Clair de Lune*" (Nos. 10 and 33) at the Goupil Galleries.

A white table-cloth spread in some garden alley, white blossoms and white wine upon it, with white chairs around it, is the keynote in "*Après le Déjeuner*"; again, in "*Le Buste*," white, modified by uncertain evening light, is the motive. The sculptured head has been set up in the garden that we know and love through our painter; it shows dimly against a wall that has not been quite darkened by night, and against a window glowing faintly with interior light. M. le Sidaner has often noted the subtle effect of an exterior wall, catching what daylight is left, framing a window illuminated by candles within; the two lights thus wage gentle warfare on canvas and show how full of interest and beauty the aspect of mere bricks, dressed a little by time perhaps, may be when discovered and

displayed by an artist's hand and eye. If a table is delightful to M. le Sidaner when covered with napery, so is the earth when covered with snow. A covering of warm autumn leaves, too, has provided lovely contrasts with the silver atmosphere in "*La Petite Epicerie*," another picture painted in the pause between day and night.

The feeling and colour of "*un le Sidaner*" is so aptly noted in M. Camille Mauclair's verses, quoted by Lady Colin Campbell, that we end with the first stanza:—

Clair de lune, nappe blanche,
Cristaux tremblants, linge, reflets,
Une lueur monte et s'épanche
Mystérieux fleuve de lait.

"The LADY."

February 23rd.

HENRI LE SIDANER, whose pictures are now being exhibited at the Goupil Gallery, has been called the Maeterlinck of painters, as Claude Debussy has been called the Maeterlinck of music, and although comparisons of this sort are generally merely tiresome, one sees very well why this one was made in the case of le Sidaner. There is the same spirit of mysterious silence in his painting as in Maeterlinck's writing. Human life is absent from his pictures, yet he conveys its presence behind his doors and windows. Some one has just kindled that light; some one has just gone out of that mystic room. Everyone who wishes to have his or her brain stimulated by an indescribable suggestion of things beyond dreams should go to the Goupil Gallery.

"The LIVERPOOL COURIER."

February 13th.

A DELIGHTFUL PICTURE EXHIBITION.

M. HENRI LE SIDANER is recognised in his own country as a really fine artist, but people here have had no opportunity to become well acquainted with his peculiar talent. For the first time in England Mr. William Marchant is holding at the Goupil Gallery a loan collection of pictures and pastels by M. le Sidaner, and these works of art are likely to meet with the admiration and appreciation they deserve. Whether portraying a wayside cottage where a faint light glimmers, an empty ill-paved street, a stately garden with marble statues, or a snow-covered landscape, the painter is always impressive. He finds poetry in everything, and is a master in atmospheric effect. The picture "*La Place du Théâtre Français*," shown in last year's Salon, which the Luxembourg desired to buy, figures in the present exhibition. The dark fountain with water falling, and tall houses around the square, from which lights gleam, are rendered with indescribable effect. Harmony is the keynote of this delightful show.

"The MANCHESTER COURIER."

February 17th.

IT is satisfactory to have the opportunity of studying an exhibition devoted entirely to the works of M. le Sidaner, for hitherto this artist has been represented by two or three works hung with paintings so different in character that I fear judgment of his capacity has been difficult to obtain. At the Goupil Gallery he has now an exclusive show, and this great French painter is consequently to be studied under the most advantageous conditions. It is noticeable that there is less monotony in his style than his English admirers had hitherto imagined. M. le Sidaner has been described as "a painter of silence and serenity," and this is true enough, for he is an impressionist with a penchant for grey night scenes, with lights gleaming through the windows of shadowy houses in dark and deserted streets. He generally omits human beings from his work, but nevertheless indicates their vicinity by some item of the composition, an empty chair, an unfinished meal, and so on. On the whole he manages to be strangely, one might almost say weirdly, impressive. He is the teacher of the romanticism of solitude.

"The MORNING POST."

February 6th.

THE other exhibition will deal with the work of M. Le Sidaner. Many people are of opinion that this painter's interest is concentrated on one effect, or rather that he is only concerned with one mood of nature. Certainly it is his twilight pictures that have been most often exhibited in London. In the exhibition which it is hoped will soon be arranged at the Goupil Gallery there will be many figure paintings and other work quite distinct from what we have come to consider his habitual "note."

"The MORNING POST."

February 13th.

THE pictures of Henri le Sidaner shown on different occasions have always formed welcome contributions to the shows at the Goupil Gallery. An exhibition has now been arranged by Messrs. Marchant comprised entirely of his works. It embraces some of his earlier paintings, among them being "Le Printemps," a large composition of white-robed maidens, whose forms are tenderly relieved against a sky tinged with pale saffron. The grace of its design and the delicacy of its colouring can but arouse regret that M. le Sidaner should not have more often spurred his fancy to like efforts. He seems, however, to have painted figures less and less as time went on, and when they did appear on his canvas, they were introduced chiefly as accessories. Yet why, after all, need we desire works of a kind

different to those many beautiful pictures he has produced? He followed his own inclinations, and the inclinations of such a true artist may be trusted to lead him in the right path. He chose to depict humble cottages, rural by-ways, village streets, views of Versailles and Paris, now and again a cathedral or a garden scene. All these served but as objects necessary to his exposition of some effect interpreted with the utmost appreciation of its charm. The hour of twilight is his favourite time, though sometimes, as in "Mon Jardin" and "L'Escalier," he treated just as happily of brilliant sunshine. Moonlight, too, appealed irresistibly to his artistic sense. What could be more exquisite than "La Table au Clair de Lune?" Such prosaic things as chairs and a table with a white cloth provided him with much of the material for the study: the all-important elements were the soft radiance of moonlight and the vagueness of shadows. "L'Orangerie de Bruges" is another nocturnal picture of captivating beauty. "La Place du Théâtre Français" has more complication of detail than exists in many of the views the artist selected, but the truth of tone maintained throughout assures that potent realism he was able to impart to his works by recording effects studied with keenly observant eye. Tranquility was an essential of these, and from this air of serenity his pictures derive their alluring quality.

The "NOTTINGHAM GUARDIAN."

February 21st.

A REPRESENTATIVE exhibition of a distinguished French artist belonging to a later generation than Fantin has been arranged at the Goupil Gallery. At the International, at the shows of the Pastel Society, one has occasionally seen isolated examples of the art of M. Henri le Sidaner, born at Mauritius in 1862. He is one of several talented men practically introduced to the British public by Mr. Marchant. The 44 pictures now brought together—most of them lent by fortunate possessors—show that within a well-defined range of vision M. le Sidaner achieves instinctively a variety of effects. Again and again golden lights, pale or radiant, issue from the casements of his pictures; often he plays with white as though—softened, shadowed, sunlit, or etherealised—it held all colours in fee. One may have been inclined to think that the artist traded on a facility of hand, a trick of sight. But, massed, these admirable examples demonstrate the exact opposite. His themes vary from "La Place du Théâtre Français" gaslit, with the fountain in the centre, to a white-spread table, with white flowers and white chairs, "Au Clair de Lune," from the façade of the wonderful cathedral at Chartres, visited by golden lights, to "Après le Déjeuner," where the posy of flowers and the liquid glory of the wine are most sensitively handled, from the fine semi-circular sweep of "Le Bassin des Tuileries" to a snow-covered terrace or a dim alley, with perhaps a statue at its end.

"PALL MALL GAZETTE."

February 22nd.

AT the Goupil Gallery is a collection, much to be welcomed, of the paintings and pastels of M. Henri le Sidaner, introduced by an excellent prefatory note by Lady Colin Campbell, who is among the lenders. We owe something to a painter who brings us beauty, and we accept it on his own terms. M. le Sidaner does not dictate more than is in his right and power. He will have our eyes to be a little dazzled, if the word can be considered proper to his twilight and his dusk. Other painters have other manners of suppressing the sharpness of things in ordinary light to ordinary eyesight, but M. le Sidaner's manner is to slip away from the eye with the same effect as to do the outlying parts of a photograph. It seems to prevent a really directed look; and that is a thing no other kind of execution, however vague, has done; we have to glance away and away. But of the whole picture we take an enveloping view that is often full of delight. The two pictures of the famous white table in particular are exquisitely beautiful. "La Table au Clair de Lune," with its white cloth, white cups, white chairs, white wall, white flowers, gentle silver, gentle warmth of light in one glowing window, has, nevertheless, not a touch of absolute white. The spirit of whiteness is there, though not the letter, and it alights with most delicate radiance on the brilliant flowers. It is in the painting of the simple chairs that M. le Sidaner attains the perfection of a real style. In "Après le Déjeuner," the white table with its silver and pale china stands in the garden in tender sunshine, and, in place of the white chrysanthemums, is a bunch of warm roses, bright as M. le Sidaner represents brightness, which is a way of spirit and sweetness. That the sunshine of this charming picture is tender contrasts it with the other scenes of sunny flowers and terraces in which the painter loses much by surrendering his mystery. In that beautiful work, "Le Buste," on the other hand, the mystery is carried, perhaps, a little too near to the less costly kind of symbolism practised by one or two contemporaries. The white bust in the severe space of gravelled garden, with the shut house beyond, seems to aspire to be somewhat magical. More really magical is the mere house, close and white, in all these twilight gardens, with no one out in the walks and on the seats—the house, secret but not dreadful. None the less is the tone of "Le Buste" fine. There is the beauty of walls also in "Clair de Lune à Gerberoy," though here, as in several other examples, the sky is questionable. Nor can one refrain from the question: Why does this attention to the tone of grey gravel, uncertain shrubs and trees, water, horizons, and all earthly things, imply some disregard of that sky from which the enveloping or visiting light is bestowed? Here and there in M. le Sidaner's landscape, a sky is dark, or hard, or unclean.

Yet in "Un Jour d'Hiver," a sky against which are traced a few trees has warmth and light. Here the subject is, besides, the mere absolute full face of a long house with its windows; but the work is veritably a picture. In "La Fontaine," a majestic decoration is made of a triple, straight-ruled perspective of pollard trees with a fountain in the middle foreground. "La Place du Théâtre Français" is a more important picture, which the Government attempted to buy for the Luxembourg, but which had already become private property; it has one of this artist's better skies; the fountain splashes in a wet day, for everything is rich and bright with water. The "place" is like a pebble still wet from the washed beach, with its darks profound and all its colours quick. M. le Sidaner's dry pebbles, by the way, are by no means dead. Of the snow-pictures, "La Terrasse—Neige" has, perhaps, the highest quality; it is a very real moonlight. In these landscapes, although the house is all-important, M. le Sidaner entirely avoids the vulgar "interest" of figures. It is a kind of drawing-master's idea that figures necessarily animate a landscape. Humanity, in these gardens and streets, and by these waterways, is quite near, but sequestered.

"The QUEEN."

February 25th.

AT the Goupil Gallery there is now on view a representative collection of the work of Henri le Sidaner, an artist of distinct personality whose work is rapidly acquiring considerable favour in England. Le Sidaner's work appeals to the imagination, and shows the faculty he possesses of investing an ordinary subject with poetic suggestiveness. Take, for example, "La Table au Clair de Lune," a prosaic subject of a dinner-table in a back garden; or "L'Escalier," a staircase leading from a small hall with the glow of sunlight seen through an open door, and see what such subjects can be made to suggest. Le Sidaner's feeling for the composition of line is shown in "Feuilles d'Automne," a fine work with wonderful richness of colour, and in the extremely decorative canvas "Le Bassin des Tuileries." Reposeful in colour and composition, the beautiful "L'Orangerie de Bruges" and "L'Evêché de Chartres," exemplify the profound sentiment which renders this artist's work so elusive in meaning and yet delightful. Although no figures are introduced, the suggestion of human life is unmistakably felt in both works together with a curious impression of repose and serenity, and "La Place du Théâtre Français" is a successful combination of realism and poetry. The rendering of atmosphere is particularly noticeable in M. le Sidaner's work. It is, however, his power of seeing the subtlest and most fugitive impression, together with less intense feeling for the silence and mystery of nature which makes his work so remarkable and unique.

"The STANDARD."

March 4th.

THE show of the work of Le Sidaner, at the Goupil Gallery, must have been a surprise to those who had taken so little stock of this artist's distinguished talent as to suppose him merely the practitioner of novel tricks of execution and studied unusualness of theme. His works at the Goupil Gallery no person of taste should miss—they display in such varied ways his serene and beautiful vision and his control of the methods that most adequately interpret it. There is not only the magic of twilight, on cottage and country town and old-world palace—there is the brilliance of sunshine and the charm of blossoming things in ordered gardens. If the present of M. Le Sidaner is distinguished, we may opine that his future is no less assured.

"The ST. JAMES' GAZETTE."

February 14th.

AT the Goupil Gallery in Regent Street, Mr. le Sidaner's work gains in effect in having the whole place to itself. It will be a revelation to those who only know this great French artist by the few pictures he has as yet exhibited in London, rather monotonous views of dull houses with lighted windows looking out into duller streets. But there is life and colour and magnificent painting in his "Place du Théâtre Français," with its great dark fountain splashing blue and silvery water, while the day dies down behind the typical Paris houses, and the little booths light up brilliantly on the pavement. The purple mass of the Porte Guillaume at Chartres, half-hidden by golden chestnut trees, is full of vivid colour. "L'Evêché de Chartres," the "Canal," with all its moving weeds and green depths, and the "Cathédrale de Beauvais," are no less strongly rendered. But unquestionably the hour that M. le Sidaner specially loves to paint is that brief twilight time between sundown and night, with its mists and its eerie shadows, when bats fly past and lights stream from the windows. His pictures suggest even more than they express—the empty chairs pushed back from *al fresco* dinner tables, Japanese lanterns lit in cool balconies, the reflections of an unseen moon. All his work is tranquil, self-restrained, and harmonious, yet at the same varied and individual.

"The STUDIO."

April.

M. LE SIDANER has been showing at the Goupil Gallery a representative set of his oil paintings and pastels. These pictures must be noted as examples of the best kind of impressionism—brilliant and scholarly technical exercises with unusual beauty of colour and effect, and distinguished by a very personal application of the particular mannerism of the school. M. Le Sidaner avoids the exaggerations of method which lead many of his fellow impressionists into what almost amounts to

affectation, and arrives, by certain devices of handling, and by the use of a system of colour subdivision which he has more or less evolved for himself, at results which are more than ordinarily convincing. This exhibition showed the variety and the strength of his practice, and by its comprehensiveness gave a very satisfactory insight into his artistic creed.

"The SUNDAY SPECIAL AND TIMES."

February 12th.

OF the many smaller exhibitions now open the most important, as well as the most interesting, is the first really representative collection of works by M. Le Sidaner to be shown in England, now on view at the Goupil Gallery. M. Le Sidaner has been called an impressionist, and in the wider sense of the word the appellation is not ill-bestowed, for he is much occupied with light, light which he expresses with such quivering tenderness, and his renderings of nature are unmistakably based on his own observation, not on the recipes and formulas of others. But with equal truth we might call him a romanticist, for his very subjects, as well as their treatment, have that glamour which make the Arthurian legends a joy for ever. In a foreword to the catalogue, Lady Colin Campbell, who says many things as true as they are nice about the artist, calls Le Sidaner "the painter of silence and serenity." He is more than this; besides the phrase is more applicable to Corot. Of silence, yes; but of serenity? No; Le Sidaner is more human than this word implies. There is something exquisitely disturbing, a suspense, a dramatic situation, sternly controlled, but none the less powerful in its appeal, in almost all his paintings. He is the painter of man's passing. Rarely will you find a human being in his works, but always you will find a suggestion of man's proximity. An empty chair, an unfinished dessert, a lighted window; these are the motives in which M. Le Sidaner delights, the motives he has made peculiarly his own. There is nothing anecdotal in such subjects; we have here poetic thought wedded to poetic expression, for Le Sidaner is essentially a poet-painter; he is one of the "old masters" of the future—and above all he is Le Sidaner, for which France and the world in general should be very grateful.

"The DAILY TELEGRAPH."

March 3rd.

WE are somewhat late in noticing an interesting exhibition, at Messrs. Goupil's, of paintings and pastels by M. Henri le Sidaner, whose work, new to England three years ago, has been steadily gaining ground ever since it has been introduced to the London public. This comprehensive display of his work comes opportunely, since it renders possible a parallel between his methods and those of the more robust impressionists of the elder school, from whom he issues. M. le Sidaner, in his latest and most popular development, owes

much to Monet and Renoir—or, rather, to his study of their technique—yet differs essentially from them and their school in his conception of landscape, his feeling for atmospheric effects, and for nature generally. When—as, for instance, in “Mon Jardin”—he attacks the familiar problems of *plein-air* and untempered palpitating sun-light, which were newer when the impressionists of the elder school so manfully and successfully wrestled with them, he does not completely succeed. Lacking are here the scintillation and the imperceptible gradation of sunlight, the suggestion of the living forces of Nature at work, that Monet and Pissarro and Renoir at their best were able to convey. M. le Sidaner is thoroughly at home, however, in these delicate transitional moments when Nature is passing from sleeping to waking or from waking to sleeping; or, when, momentarily, she is laid to rest in winter immobility beneath a white fleece of snow. With methods closely akin to, though not absolutely identical with, those of the masters whom we have just named, he expresses a wistful tenderness, a wondering melancholy, a quiet pondering of his own in the face of the familiar appearances which are yet so mysterious; and in this, above all, differs essentially, and in the most interesting fashion, from his great and vigorous forerunners. This is a development of impressionistic art, as important for the future as it is attractive.

May there not even now be materialised by the poet-painter of true and soaring imagination, as well as unerring brush, dazzling visions that shall be built on, yet not one with a radiant reality? May there not thus be embodied a new expression of the poet-self in the sublimity of joy as well as in the divine beauty of sorrow? The French romanticists of the nineteenth century—those whom we conveniently, if rather summarily label as of the Barbizon school—were infinitely touching in the monastic beauty of their reticence, their self-sacrifice, their concentration of self on Nature, their melancholy and their resignation. But why should not even yet a magician of the brush following in the footsteps of Monet, but thrilling like a harp to the beauties and terrors of the world where Monet remained calm and collected even in his exquisite delight—why should not such a man rise to heights of ecstatic joy and awful horror hitherto scaled by Turner alone—the first and greatest of all impressionists? If M. le Sidaner is not an artist of such vastness of scope and view, of such variety of accomplishment as are indispensable in him who should dare so Titanic a task as is here foreshadowed, he is at any rate in the right road when he combines with an adaptation of the most advanced methods the charm of a personal and in its discreet note of emotion very attractive interpretation. What we must once more deplore in an artist of genuine accomplishment and a sympathetic individuality is this pronounced monotony in the rendering of subjects

the most various—this fear to get away too far from the beautiful vaporous effect which is now definitely consecrated by the approval of the public. It suits well enough, no doubt, the *Pensieroso* yet far from pessimistic mood in which the French artist loves to indulge; but it cannot possibly suit and express equally well, or with the same sincerity, all the subjects—motives taken in the great city, the quiet provincial town, and the country—which M. le Sidaner affects. The too persistent repetition of the favourite effect weakens its power to move, and is calculated to bring in question even the conviction of the painter. And M. le Sidaner is as various in composition as he is monotonous in the treatment of light and atmospheric phenomena.

No modern landscapist has a better eye for a true pictorial effect, and more happily differentiates the pictorial from the merely scenic. The most remarkable piece in the exhibition is perhaps “La Place du Théâtre Français,” with the fountain which to the *habitué* of the Comédie Française is so familiar a landmark. Here is not only a masterly composition, a street scene full of rhythm and movement, but an interpretation of penetrating beauty and truth, indefinitely conveying something of the deep pathos and the infinite mystery that lie near the service even of the most everyday life of a great city. “La Table au Clair de Lune” gives, in a scene of a certain *intimité*—akin in feeling though in nothing else to Chardin—a moonlight effect of the true ghostly and disquieting coldness. This strange light saddens, transforms the familiar into the unknown, the uncanny. “Au Jardin” is simply the flowery garden-plot in front of a country house, made beautiful, here and there, by the golden touch of sunset. A moment of ephemeral beauty and of pensive reflection is here realised. The hushed quietude, not the relentless power and cruelty, of winter is delicately evoked in these pure, transparent, snow-scenes, “La Neige,” “La Terrasse—Neige,” and the gayer “Neige au Soleil.” Another moonlight study, singularly true in tone, is the “Orangerie de Bruges.” In the pastel, “Le Bassin des Tuileries,” with its broad sweep of shallow water set in its confining edge of marble, M. le Sidaner reminds us somewhat of M. Helleu and his autumn fantasies, taken from the garden of Versailles. A wistful tenderness, a delight in the moment of pause and rest—this is, as we have already pointed out, the keynote to this French artist’s transcripts of the world in some of its loveliest though not its most striking or dramatic aspects. In this direction he has accomplished all, or nearly all, that can be accomplished with this standpoint, and with these little varying methods. We hope now, not for repetitions of or variations on familiar themes—themselves not the broadest nor the most representative, but among those of which custom can undoubtedly stale the by no means infinite variety—but for the resolve and the power to depict, and in not less intimate sympathy than heretofore to interpret, quite other and not less suggestive aspects of Nature. So only can the gifted French landscapist maintain possession of the ground which he has won.

"The TIMES."

February 27th.

ANOTHER French painter, but one of a younger generation, who, we hope, has before him many years of life and work, is exhibiting for the first time a collection of his pictures at the Goupil Gallery in Regent Street. This is M. Henri le Sidaner, the author of those misty and "dematerialized" landscapes and town views of which from time to time specimens have been seen in this gallery during the last few years. M. Le Sidaner belongs to the artistic family of Corot, Cazin, and Whistler; perhaps one should say, after seeing Monet in the Grafton Galleries, that he owes something to the snow and sunlight of the leader of the Impressionist landscape painters. But, none the less he is entirely original; he copies nobody, and nobody has yet succeeded in copying him. Like so many other painters of our time, he is intensely preoccupied with questions of light, and especially of twilight and moonlight, though, to be sure, he does not shrink from the sun, as several pictures of his own house and garden sufficiently prove. Perhaps the most interesting, because the boldest, of his attempts is the picture called "La Table au Clair de Lune"—nothing but a table covered with a white cloth with dishes and plates, &c., standing by a window in the streaming moonlight. "It is interesting," said the artist in reference to this picture, "to study the participation of objects in the atmosphere;" a sentence typical of half the artistic efforts of our time. People who, like the painter himself, study the same problems will be delighted with the delicate and beautiful solution which he has given to so many of them. The little exhibition is one of those best worth seeing at the present moment.

"TO-DAY."

March 1st.

THE other exhibition is at the Goupil Gallery, where, also for the first time in England, is a representative collection of the works of M. Le Sidaner, who, in the opinion of many, is the most original and most exquisite of France's younger painters. To all these exhibitions I hope shortly to return; for the moment I can barely enumerate the pictorial feast spread before the eyes of London.

"TO-DAY."

March 15th.

Impressionism in Evolution; Le Sidaner.

OWING, possibly to the average Englishman's scanty knowledge of French, a recent article by a distinguished French critic on "La Fin d'Impressionism," seems to have been badly misunderstood in this country. In art the end of one movement is the beginning of the next, and this was the point made by the French writer, who endeavoured to trace the lines of progress of several of the younger French painters who have been influenced by the Impressionists. The title of the article was, perhaps, a little unfortunate; "growth" or "development" would have been more suited to

its argument than "end"—which some opponents to impressionism in this country have rendered by "death." But the blunders of the foolish need not detain us, and I only mention the article because one of the young artists referred to therein is now having his first "one-man-show" in London.

At the Goupil Gallery there will remain on exhibition till the end of this week a notable collection of paintings by M. Henri Le Sidaner, a rare and precious artist, who has made use of the impressionist technique for the expression of new beauties, new aspects, which he has made peculiarly his own. Like his great fore-runners, he is preoccupied with the beauty of light, which he depicts with a quivering tenderness all his own. Some idea of the shimmering glamour of his work is conveyed in the lines of Moore:—

One of those passing rainbow dreams,
Half light, half shade, which fancy beams
Paint on the fleeting mists that roll,
In trance or slumber, round the soul.

But there is another strange quality in the work of Le Sidaner, for in his most silent, almost peaceful, subjects there is always something intensely dramatic, an air of suspense, a Maeterlinckian sense of impending tragedy. In a Le Sidaner nothing happens, for he is no anecdotal painter; but one always feels that something is about to happen, or is happening elsewhere. Take a typical Le Sidaner subject; you will find a table and three empty chairs in a garden; on the table a lighted lamp and the remains of a dessert. On one of the chairs a napkin lies where carelessly it has been thrown. From the windows of the house gleams forth a light which melts into the evening air. Another painter might take the same subject, and suggest nothing more than the fact that it had become too chilly to sit any longer outside. But by the very way in which he lays his pigment on the canvas, Le Sidaner invests the scene with a romance, a mysterious poetic essence, appealing most poignantly to our emotions. Essentially human are his works, though a human being rarely figures therein. So, once again, a true artist teaches us that it is not the thing seen and painted, but the way in which it is seen and painted that makes a great picture. And because he has done this, Le Sidaner is one of the few moderns who count, is one of the "old masters" of the future.

"The TRAVELLERS' MAGAZINE."

March 19th.

THE Exhibition of the French artist, Henri le Sidaner, which has just closed at the Goupil Gallery, has been an artistic treat to those who appreciate the magic and mystery of Nature. His feeling and his mastery of the composition of line is charmingly depicted in canvases such as: "Feuilles d'Automne," "La Table au Clair de Lune," "L'Orangerie de Bruges," "L'Évêché de Chartres," in which, though no figures are introduced, the suggestion of human life is nevertheless felt in a manner that makes his meaning no less elusive than delightful. M. le Sidaner is an artist of very distinctive

personality, with an immense power of appealing to the imagination: "La Place du Théâtre Français" is quite a *tour de force*, and eminently Parisian in its combination of realism and poetry.

"TRUTH."

February 23rd.

AT the Goupil Gallery I again had reason for profound depression. For here I found proof after proof of the way that a prevalent heresy in Art has been adopted by a French artist of considerable merit. With M. Henri le Sidaner it is in short accepted as an axiom that in painting a picture the subject painted is of no account whatsoever—all that matters is the manner in which the painting is achieved. Thus he is content to lavish the talent which has already procured admission for some of his pictures to the Luxembourg on such unsympathetic subjects as the corner of a dark staircase; an ashbin in a squalid back yard; an elaborate study of broken crockeryware on a derelict dresser; and other such uninteresting objects. I am not sure if, like M. Chardin, he ever threw himself *con amore* into showing what his ill-used artistic versatility could make of a dish of fried eggs and bacon, or whether he has ever tried to rival that perfervid Scots artist whose study of a smoking haggis drew tears from a bailie of Galashiels some few years ago. But it is difficult when anyone sees what taste he sometimes shows in the selection of his subjects (he has a picture of snow at the Goupil Gallery which is delightful), not to lose patience with him for deliberately wasting his ability in painting a blank wall, a water-butt by moonlight, or an elaborate study of a dust-cart in a fog.

"TRUTH."

March 9th.

ARTISTIC BATHOS.

THE proprietor of the Goupil Gallery has taken exception to some remarks of mine, written, as is evident from the tone of the paragraph in which they occur, in a vein of palpable exaggeration, on the "one man" show of M. Henri le Sidaner. The gravamen of the charge made against me is that I attribute to the artist in question the inclusion in some of his drawings of certain objects which, as a matter of literal fact, are not to be found in them. It would be easy to retort that this is not the sort of mistake not unlikely to happen in looking at the pictures of an arch impressionist. The critic in such circumstances often receives an "impression" from a certain drawing which is different from that which the artist intended to convey. Thus there was one picture by M. le Sidaner my "impression" of which varied with the square of my distance from it. From one point of view I could not have sworn that it was not a water-butt looming through an environment of ghostly moonlight. From a closer one it was curiously suggestive of a white elephant in a mist. As a fact, however, I now know that this protean pastel was in reality the presentment of a table spread with a white cloth and set out for a meal of some sort in a back garden!

But it is not on the ground of mistaken "impression" that I purpose to defend my paragraph. As the readers of this column know, I lose no chance of condemning what I consider the art heresy contained in the assertion that, to an artist, the *subject* of his picture is of no consequence whatsoever—that, in fact, if a scene is well painted it matters not at all what that well-painted scene may be. Be it trivial, or commonplace, or ugly, or even revolting in itself, an artist has only to reproduce it with marked technical skill to make it at once a work of art, too serious to be chaffed, and almost too sacred to be criticised. Naturally, therefore, when I found M. le Sidaner—an artist, as made clear in my impugned paragraph, of undoubted talent and taste—repeatedly showing by his works that he had embraced this rapidly spreading heresy, I was greatly disappointed, and lamented what seemed to me a deliberate waste of his exceptional powers. To point my moral more effectively, I then mentioned certain things, commonplace, and devoid of any interest, personal or æsthetic, such as a back staircase, an ashbin in a backyard, a study of broken crockeryware on a dresser, and so on, and went on to express my regret that so delightful an artist should be at times content to lavish his talent on *such* unsympathetic subjects as those I had named. Now, "such," I may add, means "the like" quite as often as it means "the same," and when I used the word it was in its former and wider sense. I meant, in fact, that M. le Sidaner has "stooped" to paint similarly prosaic and unsympathetic things, and not absolutely the precise objects catalogued by me.

For the purpose of my argument it really matters little whether the repeated studies of domestic crockeryware to be seen at the Goupil Gallery were set out on a table or a dresser. Possibly, also, none of the cups or saucers I alluded to were broken ones. My "impression" is that some, at least, of them were cracked! So, again, the backyard painted by M. le Sidaner may not, I admit, have been a squalid one. I will even allow that, compared to some backyards that he *might* have painted, it was imposing and grandiose. But this was not my point. The pity of it, to my mind, was that M. le Sidaner should trouble to paint tea and coffee services and backyards at all. To me it seemed lamentable that technical skill, so full of subtle beauties as his, should be devoted to the glorification of a couple of kitchen chairs, or employed in the impossible task of proving that art can make an empty, ill-paved city sium as full of poetry as a garden steeped in sunshine.

I am not altogether sorry, however, to have this chance of returning to the subject of M. le Sidaner's exhibition. It affords me an opportunity for again expressing the admiration which I feel for much of his work, and at the same time of repeating my protest against his too frequent lapses into what I can only call artistic bathos. I do not deny—nay, I admit, as I have already admitted—the beauty and poetic insight and suggestiveness of many of his pastels. One cannot be blind to the exquisite values of the tones in his harmonies and symphonies of colour,

to his wonderful power of imbuing with a luminous atmosphere all he paints. But it is on these grounds that I reiterate with all the more emphasis my regret that he should ever handicap himself by painting back staircases, backyards (squalid or otherwise), and scenes of still-life.

"The WESTERN DAILY PRESS."

February 20th.

THE picture exhibitions must come second, though they include a collection of paintings, drawings, and lithographs by Fantin-Latour, pictures and pastels by M. Le Sidaner. The Le Sidaner show at the Goupil Gallery is likely to bring about a surer appreciation of the French painter. Seeing a picture now and again—chiefly at Goupil—one was hardly prepared for the variety of outlook, the range of a palette that has as especial notes of value the yellow of lighted casements, the white that is not white of plastered house-fronts in softly shadowed evenings. Forty-four pictures by the same hand, rendering an aspect of reality that is deliberately chosen and adhered to, are sufficient to bring out any poverty of idea, any slur or trick in the work. M. le Sidaner, with his apprehension of "the veils of the evening," of solitudes in time and space, whether the place be a garden of courts, with a statue at the end of a dim alley, or a little street, or the "place" of a town, has enough material for these forty-four pictures, and for more than these. The work gains by being massed. One sees the modulations, not the repetition, of the thought, the pictorial idea.

"WESTMINSTER GAZETTE."

February 17th

At the Goupil Gallery, 5, Regent-street, there is a collection of pictures and pastels by M. Henri le Sidaner, an artist already well known in England, who has exhibited here on several occasions before, but who now gives us an opportunity of seeing his work on a more extended and varied scale. M. le Sidaner is a painter of talent and sensibility who has been much admired in Paris and whose work has twice been bought for the Luxembourg. He has almost invented a new kind of picture, which is, as it were, a blend of landscape, still-life, and portrait. He takes some quite restricted subject—a corner of a street, a back garden, a staircase-passage, or even a table and crockery left out in a courtyard at evening; he dwells on these things, under some magic of light and atmosphere, in a sort of soft *recueillement* of mood, until they seem to exhale something like a soul of their own, *vagula, blandula*. And we are surprised that so much expression can be deduced from such simple things. But I suppose to get expression into a portrait was at first a kind of miracle, and afterwards that a landscape should be made to speak its own mind not less so. And Chardin was able to make a pile of grapes and pears or a dish of eggs and ham expressive. Yet I think M. le Sidaner does not always completely justify himself in his choice of subject. To brood tenderly over a table and chair, or a blank wall

is to run some risk of bathos. But his tact and taste are generally fine enough to carry him through. In such things as "L'Orangerie de Bruges," "La Rue de L'Arche," "Le Petit Trianon" (in snow at twilight), "Mon Jardin," where the hydrangea drink the sunlight at noon, or "La Terrasse" (another snow nocturne), he is at his best and a distinguished and charming artist. His feeling and method have something in common with those of Mr. Clausen, and, like him, he uses oil paint so much in the manner of pastel that it is often difficult to distinguish the one medium from the other

"THE WORLD."

February 14th

THE exhibitions this week are unusually interesting; and first and foremost among them stands the collection of M. Le Sidaner's works now on view at the Goupil Gallery, 5 Regent Street. This is the first time that this artist's works have been presented to the English public in the form of a "one-man" exhibition, though the connoisseurs who frequent Mr. Marchant's charming gallery have not been slow to acquire those pictures by M. Le Sidaner which from time to time have made their appearance therein. Indeed, the large majority of the works in the present exhibition (which fills the two galleries) have been lent by their fortunate proprietors; for Le Sidaner's pictures do not remain long without claimants. The collection is one to delight everyone who can appreciate delicate harmonies of colour and wonderful variety of atmospheric effects; for never was a painter more eclectic in choice of hour and subject than Le Sidaner. He delights equally in a blaze of sunlight, as in "Mon Jardin," and in the cold mystery of moonlight that so elusively illumines "L'Orangerie de Bruges," with the extraordinarily subtle quality of the shadows of the trees in the foreground; in the scintillating silver of dawn in "Le Printemps," wherein the youth of the year, of the day, and of maidenhood form a trio of indescribable poetry and virginal delicacy; in the golden glories of autumn in "L'Automne," and "Chartres, La Porte Guillaume"; and the beautiful misery of snow in "Buicourt en Neige" and "Un Jour d'Hiver." Whether he is treating architecture, as in "La Cathédrale, Chartres," "Clair de Lune à Gerberoy," or "La Place du Théâtre Français" (which the Luxembourg wished to purchase out of last year's Salon, if it had not been already acquired by an English purchaser), or a subject so absolutely simple as "L'Escalier" or "Après le Déjeuner," he discovers in one and all a beauty of tone, a rhythm of composition, and a subtle quality of atmosphere, which are none the less absolutely true for being his own interpretation of a beauty which escapes most people until an artist such as he sets it before them. "The harvest of a quiet eye"—and "of a quiet mind" might be added thereto: such is this delightful collection, which reveals a strangely poetic and fascinating personality in art, to whom silence and serenity are the chief handmaids of beauty.



Printed by
BURSILL & LADYMAN, LIMITED,
247-9, COLDHARBOUR LANE,
LONDON, S.W.